

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

RFA # GD0—SATPG—23

District of Columbia

Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)



Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Act Teacher Pipeline Grants

Request for Application (RFA) Release Date

Feb. 17, 2023

Pre-Application Webinars (Mandatory)

March 7 & 9, 2023

Notice of Intent to Apply Deadline (Mandatory)

March 17, 2023

Application Submission Deadline

April 3, 2023

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Checklist for Application
FY23 SOAR Act Teacher Pipeline Grants

- The applicant submitted a Notice of Intent to Apply on or before **Friday, March 17, 2023**. The Notice of Intent to Apply form can be found in Appendix A.
- The applicant attended one of the two **mandatory** pre-application webinars. Please see Request for Application (RFA) Section 2.2 for webinar dates, times and registration.
- The applicant completed all steps required by the RFA and submitted a complete application, through OSSE's Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS) that contains all the required information and attachments. Please see RFA Section 3 for an overview of the application components.

Please note: All required application elements must be submitted by entering information directly into the required sections in EGMS. Unless otherwise stated in the application, information submitted via attachment will be considered as supplemental materials only.

- The application adheres to the directions and criteria of each section of this RFA.
- The application was submitted **by 3 p.m. EST on Monday, April 3, 2023**, through EGMS.

PLEASE NOTE

Applications are due by 3 p.m. on Monday, April 3, 2023.

The application deadline will be strictly enforced. Applications submitted at or after 3:01 p.m. EST on Monday, April 3, 2023, will not be reviewed.

All applications must be submitted through the Enterprise Grants Management System (EGMS). For more information about EGMS, please visit grants.osse.dc.gov.

This application will be open for 30 business days. Please avoid last minute technical submission issues by submitting early. OSSE strongly recommends submitting your application at least one day early to ensure that avoidable technical issues do not cause you to miss the submission deadline.

Request for Applications
RFA # GDO-SATPG-23

Section 1: General Information

1.1 Introduction

Overview of the SOAR Act

As a part of a three-sector federal funding approach, the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results (SOAR) Act, Pub. L. 112-10, 125 Stat. 199, as amended, is a federal law that authorizes funding for District of Columbia (DC) public charter schools “to improve and expand quality public charter schools in the District of Columbia” §3004(b)(2). SOAR Act funds for District of Columbia (DC) charter schools are provided to the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) through the US Department of Education (USED) as a grant. The SOAR Act also provides funding for District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) and the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) for DC students to attend private schools.

1.2 Purpose of Funds

Through this RFA, OSSE is soliciting proposals from eligible applicants for the following grant program:

- **Teacher Pipeline Grants**
 - The purpose of this funding program is to impact the quality and quantity of the teacher supply for DC charter schools. Teacher pipeline projects are initiatives that a) recruit high-quality candidates new to teaching for DC charter school teacher residency or teacher roles **and** b) train and/or certify these teachers. All projects should be designed to have direct and rapid impact on academic achievement and outcomes for students.
 - Grant awards may not exceed \$7,500 per teacher. SOAR grant funds may not be the sole source of funding for the proposed project and applications must include a description of how the full costs of the program will be covered (e.g., other grants, philanthropy/fundraising, school contributions, teacher contributions, etc.).
 - If a nonprofit charter support organization awardee is partnered with a DC public charter school (referenced in this RFA as an LEA) awardee, SOAR funding for both awardees may not exceed \$7,500 per teacher.
 - The theory of action for each project must be supported by data and research.
 - Funding priority may be given to projects serving schools with high-need populations, including high percentages of English learners and/or students with disabilities; projects that address hard-to-staff grade levels and subjects; projects seeking to reduce achievement and equity gaps between subgroups of students;

and projects seeking to provide pathways for paraprofessionals to become certified teachers.

1.3 Source of Funding

USED, through the DC School Choice Incentive Program, 84.370C, Public Law 108-199, III, DC School Incentive Act of 2003; as reauthorized by the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act, effective April 15, 2011 (Pub. L. 112-10; 125 Stat. 199), as amended (D.C. Code 38-1853.01 et seq).

1.4 Requirements of Funding

This grant award is made subject to the terms, conditions and provisions of the General Education Provisions Act (Pub. L. 90-247), as amended and codified at 20 U.S.C 1221 et seq. This grant is also subject to the regulations in 34 CFR Part 200, as applicable, the Education Department's General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 75, 77, 81, 82, 84 and 99, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements in 2 CFR Parts 200 and 3474 and the Non-procurement Debarment and Suspension regulations in 2 CFR Parts 180 and 3485.

Further, in addition to the requirements of this RFA, the assurances made in the submitted application and the terms of the Grant Award Notice (GAN) issued by OSSE to the subgrantee, a key condition for receiving these funds is compliance with activities necessary to carry out a mandated evaluation of the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP), as specified in Section 3011(a)(1) of the SOAR Act. Pursuant to this section, the USED's Institute of Education Sciences (IES) is required to evaluate annually the performance of students who applied to the OSP (Sec. 3009). Because some OSP applicants will be enrolled in public charter schools, it will be necessary for IES and its evaluation contractor to collect data on and from public charter school campuses once each year during the applicable grant period. Please be advised that noncompliance of the organization with the terms and conditions stated in the SOAR Act GAN may result in the withholding of SOAR Act funds administered by OSSE.

1.5 Funds Available and Funding Period

At least \$2,250,000.00 is available for awards through this RFA. OSSE will provide up to \$500,000.00 per award. Awards are limited to one per organization. The duration of the Teacher Pipeline grant is for a period of two years from the grant award date. The awarded entity will need to complete a continuation application within OSSE's EGMS each fiscal year.

Continuation of awards in year two is contingent upon:

- Availability of funds;

- Recipient’s implementation and/or operation of the program as submitted in the application;
- Recipient’s demonstration that substantial progress has been made toward meeting the objectives set forth in the approved application, based on ongoing monitoring and review of the recipient’s reports;
- Compliance with District and federal laws, regulations and guidance; and
- Appropriate expenditure of funds throughout each grant award period.

1.6 Eligibility

Eligible Nonprofit Charter Support Organizations:

- Must be a nonprofit organization with a demonstrated history of success working with charter schools on similar projects; and
- Must serve under this grant program two or more public charter LEAs within DC and submit letters of commitment from each partner.

Eligible DC public charter LEAs:

- Must be a DC public charter LEA, or consortium of DC public charter LEAs, in good standing with the Public Charter School Board;
- A consortium of DC public charter LEAs must apply through a lead applicant and submit a letter of commitment from each of the members of the consortium;
- Must partner under this grant program with one or more nonprofit third-party charter school support organizations with a demonstrated history of success working with charter schools on projects that are designed to: a) recruit, or partner with public charter LEAs or other organizations to recruit high-quality candidates new to teaching for teacher residency or teacher roles and b) train and/or certify these teachers; and
- Must submit a letter of commitment from a nonprofit third-party charter support organization as well as a complete list of all schools and districts to which the organization has provided similar services.
- If applying as a consortium, one DC public charter LEA must submit the application and act as the lead fiscal agent, responsible for fiscal and programmatic implementation.

1.7 Permissible Use of Funds

The funds associated with this RFA are available strictly on a reimbursement basis and may only be used for allowable grant project expenditures during the grant period as follows:

- All costs must:
 - Meet requirements of permissible use of federal funds within EDGAR 34 CFR Part 75, 2 CFR Part 200 as adopted in 2 CFR Part 3474, 2 CFR Part 180 as adopted in 2 CFR 3485;

- Align with and support the project(s) described in the organization’s application; and
- Meet the specific needs of each partner charter school as identified within the needs assessment(s) conducted.

All grant project budgets will be reviewed by a review panel, as well as OSSE staff, to ensure that planned expenditures are allowable and are appropriate, reasonable and necessary to support the grant objectives.

Section 2: Schedule

2.1 RFA Release

The release date of the RFA is Feb. 17, 2023. The RFA is available online at osse.dc.gov/service/scholarships-opportunity-and-results-soar-act-grant.

2.2 Pre-Application Webinar

Pre-application webinars will be held on the following dates:

- Tuesday, March 7, 2023, from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.
- Thursday, March 9, 2023, from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m.

To register for a webinar, visit: <https://register.gotoweinar.com/rt/6182321215546295896>

Each interested organization must have at least one representative attend one of the above webinars in order to meet the attendance requirement to apply for this grant. Webinar attendance is tracked electronically through registration and online attendance. The organization representative should be familiar with the organization’s past teacher pipeline work with charter schools or a representative from the applicant public charter LEA(s).

2.3 Intent to Apply

All eligible entities seeking to receive funding under this RFA must submit a Notice of Intent to Apply (Appendix A), signed by an authorized official of the organization, via email to opcsfs.funding@dc.gov on or before **Friday, March 17, 2023**.

2.4 Contact Person(s)

Applicants are advised that the following OSSE staff members are the authorized contact persons for this grant competition:

- Brianna Griffin, Manager, Office of Federal Programs and Strategic Funding (Brianna.Griffin@dc.gov)

2.5 Applications Due

Applications are due Monday, April 3, 2023, by 3 p.m. EST and must be submitted through EGMS. **Applicants are encouraged to submit applications early to avoid any technical difficulties. OSSE strongly encourages submitting applications at least one day early to ensure that avoidable technical issues do not cause you to miss the submission deadline.**

2.6 Updates

Information and updates regarding the grant competitions will be emailed to all potential applicants that submit a Notice of Intent to Apply or attend a pre-application webinar specific to this grant.

2.7 Awards Announcement

Awards will be announced via EGMS, email and the OSSE website. OSSE will disseminate grant award notifications following the awards announcement.

Section 3: Application

3.1 Application Content

The application in EGMS contains the following sections or "tabs." Unless noted, each section must be completed as instructed in the system:

- Section 1 – Overview (*informational, nothing to complete*)
- Section 2 – Contact Information
- Section 3 – Partner Information
 - Partner Names
 - Letters of Commitment
 - Demonstrated History of Success
- Section 4 – Main Application
 - Needs Assessment
 - Project Description
 - Theory of Action
 - Equitable Access and Participation
 - Logic Model
- Section 5 – Funding Priority
- Section 6 – Budget
 - Budget Overview
 - Summary of Planned Expenditures
 - Salaries and Benefits
 - Professional Services
 - Equipment

- Supplies and Materials
- Other Objects
- Budget Summary
- Section 7 – Supporting Documentation
- Section 8 – Assurances
 - Program Specific Assurances
 - Assurances Agreement Summary
- Section 9 – Submit (*application is not complete until it is submitted through this tab*)
- Section 10 – Application Print (*hard copies of applications may be printed through this tab*)
- Section 11 – Application History (*the history of who has accessed and modified the application may be viewed through this tab*)

Section 4: Scoring

4.1 Review Panel

The grants described in this RFA will be awarded competitively. A panel or panels of external reviewers will be convened to review, score and rank each application. The review panel(s) will be composed of neutral, qualified, professional individuals selected for their expertise, knowledge and/or related experiences. All external reviewers must sign a Conflict of Interest statement. The application will be scored against a rubric. The complete rubric can be found in EGMS for review. OSSE may convene any panel to conduct a facilitated discussion of the reviewers' scores and comments of a particular application. A facilitated discussion provides an opportunity for reviewers to hear other panel members' reasoning for their scores and comments. A reviewer is not required to change their scores or comments after a facilitated discussion.

Upon completion of the panel review(s), the panel(s) shall make recommendations for awards based on the scoring rubric(s). The State Superintendent of Education, or their designee will consider those recommendations but all final award decisions are left to the Superintendent's, or his/her/their designee's discretion. Winning applicants may be required to make amendments to the Budget or other application sections to meet grant requirements. A denied applicant may file an appeal of OSSE's award determination within 30 days of receipt of award denial notification on the grounds that OSSE violated a District or federal statute or regulation. Denied applicants may contact OSSE's program contact for information on the appeal process.

4.2 Funding Priority

Funding priority may be given to projects serving schools with high-need populations, including high percentages of English learners and/or students with disabilities; projects that address

hard-to-staff grade levels and subjects; projects seeking to reduce achievement and equity gaps between subgroups of students; and projects seeking to provide pathways for paraprofessionals to become certified teachers.

The priority area(s) to be addressed by a proposed project should be evident from the content of the submitted application and supported by data and research. Reviewers will independently assess whether a proposed project meets one or more of the priority areas.

OSSE may elect to fund priority projects at a higher level than non-priority projects. If there are more quality applications than available funds, OSSE may elect to fund priority projects instead of one or more nonpriority projects that received a higher score.

Section 5: Award Administration

5.1 Decision and Notifications of Awards

In order to be awarded a grant, organizations must establish eligibility by submitting an application to OSSE in accordance with the relevant program statute(s) and this RFA. Each awarded applicant will receive a GAN generated through OSSE's EGMS that will include the award amount, award agreement, terms and conditions of the award and any supplemental information required. Once OSSE has fully approved the application and issued an official GAN, grantees may receive payment for allowable expenditures for which obligation was made during the grant period. OSSE has implemented a reimbursement process for all grantees. Grant award payments are reimbursable on a monthly (and no later than quarterly) basis. Program costs must be paid by the grantee to the payee prior to requesting reimbursement; it is not sufficient for costs merely to be incurred. Compliance with programmatic and fiscal implementation and reporting will be considered in paying reimbursement requests. To receive reimbursement for grant program expenditures, OSSE grantees must complete and submit a reimbursement request electronically using EGMS.

5.2 Audits

At any time, or times, before final payment and during the required record retention period, the District and/or the federal government may audit the applicant's expenditure statements and source documentation.

5.3 Monitoring and Reporting

All awards will be reviewed during the grant period for compliance with programmatic and fiscal requirements. OSSE's Division of Systems and Supports, K-12 uses a coordinated, risk-based monitoring approach. The type of monitoring that the subgrantee will receive (desktop or on-site) will vary depending on its designation as a high, medium, or low risk subgrantee. Please review the annual grants monitoring guidance for more information:

osse.dc.gov/publication/risk-based-monitoring-tools-and-resources.

Monitoring efforts are designed to determine the recipient's level of compliance with federal and/or District requirements and identify specifically whether the grantee's operational, financial and management systems and practices are adequate to account for program funds in accordance with federal and/or District requirements. Failure to maintain compliance with such requirements may result in payment suspension, disallowance of costs or termination of the grant.

The recipient shall be required to cooperate with all requirements and information requests by OSSE relating to evaluation of the program and the collection of data, information and reporting on outcomes regarding the program and activities carried out with grant funds. The recipient shall be required to reply and acknowledge OSSE's information requests within 48 hours and to provide requested information within 10 business days.

5.4 Confidentiality

Except as otherwise provided by local or federal law, no recipient of the grant shall use or reveal any research, statistical information, or personally identifiable information furnished by OSSE for any person or for any purpose other than that for which such information was obtained in accordance with the OSSE program funded. Any identifiable personal information and any copy of such information, shall be immune from legal process and shall not, without the written consent of the person identified in the information, be admitted as evidence or used for any purpose in any action, suit, or judicial, legislative, or administrative proceeding. The grantee will protect any personally identifiable information (PII) received in administering the grant and follow all applicable laws regarding the protection and use of the PII. Before disclosing PII to any other party, the grantee must first receive approval from OSSE.

5.5 Nondiscrimination in the Delivery of Services

The recipient shall comply with the District of Columbia Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, (D.C. Official Code § 2-1401.01 *et seq.*) which prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, source of income, disability, sealed eviction record status as a victim of an intra-family offense, place of residence or business, status as a victim or family member of a victim of domestic violence, a sexual offense, or stalking and homeless status.

5.6 Conflict of Interest

All grant recipients shall ensure that no individual in a decision-making capacity will engage in any activity, including participation in the selection of a vendor, the administration of an award,

or an activity supported by award funds, if a conflict of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest would be involved. A conflict of interest would arise when the individual, any member of the individual's immediate family, the individual's partner, or an organization that employs, or is about to employ, any of the aforementioned has a financial or personal interest in the firm or organization selected for a contract.

5.7 Vaccination Requirements

The grant recipient must comply with all District laws and regulations and Mayor's Orders regarding District COVID vaccination requirements.

5.8 Terms and Conditions

- Funding for this award is contingent on available funds. The RFA does not commit OSSE to make an award.
- OSSE reserves the right to accept or deny any or all applications if OSSE determines it is in the best interest of OSSE to do so. OSSE shall notify the applicant if it rejects that applicant's proposal. OSSE may suspend or terminate an outstanding RFA pursuant to its own grant making rule(s) or any applicable federal or local regulation or requirement.
- OSSE reserves the right to issue addenda and/or amendments subsequent to the issuance of the RFA, or to rescind the RFA.
- OSSE shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of applications in response to the RFA. Applicant agrees that all costs incurred in developing the application are the applicant's sole responsibility.
- OSSE may conduct pre-award on-site visits to verify information submitted in the application and to determine if the applicant's facilities are appropriate for the services intended.
- OSSE may enter negotiations with an applicant and adopt a firm funding amount or other revision of the applicant's proposal that may result from negotiations.
- OSSE shall provide the citations to the statute and implementing regulations that authorize the grant or sub grant; all applicable federal and District regulations; payment provisions identifying how the grantee will be paid for performing under the award; reporting requirements, including programmatic, financial and any special reports required by OSSE; and compliance conditions that must be met by the grantee.
- If there are any conflicts between the terms and conditions of the RFA and any applicable federal or local law or regulation, or any ambiguity related thereto, then the provisions of the applicable law or regulation shall control, and it shall be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance.

Appendix A

Official Intent to Apply Notification

Must be received by OSSE no later than March 17, 2023

PDF Submission Preferred

TO: OSSE Office of Public Charter School Financing and Support
opcsfs.funding@dc.gov

FROM: _____
(Public Charter School LEA or Organization Name)

RE: Intent to Apply for FY23 Scholarships for Opportunities and Results (SOAR) Act
Teacher Pipeline Grant

LEA or Organization Name: _____

LEA or Organization Address: _____

Contact Person: _____

Contact Person Telephone: _____

Contact Person Email: _____

I understand that the deadline for these grant applications is 3 p.m. EST on Monday, April 3, 2023, and that late applications will not be reviewed.

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(LEA or Organization Official)

Appendix B

Scoring Rubric

Partner Data (Maximum 10 points)

Criterion	Score Not Assignable	Limited/Weak	Fair/Good	Strong/Exceptional
<p>Nonprofit applicants: The applicant identified two or more partner LEAs and uploaded signed letters of commitment from each partner</p> <p>LEA applicants: The applicant identified one or more partner organizations and uploaded a signed letter of commitment from each partner</p>	No – 0	Yes – 2		
<p>Nonprofit applicants: The applicant demonstrated a history of success working with public charter schools on similar projects, including data that demonstrates the impact of the organization on the recruitment and retention of charter school teachers and how the project impacted academic outcomes for students</p> <p>LEA applicants: The applicant demonstrated the partner organization’s history of success working with public charter schools on similar projects, including data that demonstrates the impact of the organization on the recruitment and retention of charter school teachers and how the project impacted academic outcomes for students</p>	0	2	4	6
<p>Nonprofit applicants: The applicant provided a list of all charter schools/LEAs for which the organization is currently providing or has provided similar services</p> <p>LEA applicants: The applicant provided a list of all charter schools/LEAs for which the partner organization is currently providing or has provided similar services</p>	No – 0	Yes – 2		

Needs Assessment (Maximum 21 points)

Criterion	Score Not Assignable	Limited/Weak	Fair/Good	Strong/Exceptional
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For each public charter school involved in the project, the applicant demonstrated a clear and specific need for the proposed project	0	5	10	15
The applicant used recent quantitative and/or qualitative data to substantiate the need	0	2	4	6

Project Description (Maximum 27 points)

Criterion	Score Not Assignable	Limited Weak	Fair/Good	Strong/Exceptional
The applicant described the proposed project and activities in detail	0	5	10	15
The applicant demonstrated how the proposed project will address the need(s) identified in the needs assessment	0	2	4	6
The applicant included a management plan to ensure success of the project that outlined roles and responsibilities for each party	0	2	4	6

Theory of Action (Maximum 12 points)

Criterion	Score Not Assignable	Limited/Weak	Fair/Good	Strong/Exceptional
The theory of action statement uses sound logic to demonstrate how and why the project will be successful in improving academic outcomes for students	0	2	4	6
The theory of action is based on credible research and/or evidence	0	2	4	6

Equitable Access and Participation (Maximum 6 points)

Criterion	Score Not Assignable	Limited/Weak	Fair/Good	Strong/Exceptional
The applicant clearly described how it will ensure equitable access to and participation in grant-funded activities	0	2	4	6

Logic Model (Maximum 12 points)

Criterion	Score Not Assignable	Limited/Weak	Fair/Good	Strong/Exceptional
All elements of the logic model (SMART goal, inputs, outputs, outcomes, assumptions and external factors) are well-defined	0	2	4	6
The logic model clearly demonstrates how the proposed project will produce the intended academic outcomes for students	0	2	4	6

Budget (Maximum 12 points)

Criterion	Score Not Assignable	Limited/Weak	Fair/Good	Strong/Exceptional
The budget describes specific costs that clearly align with the proposed project	0	2	4	6
Budgeted costs are reasonable and necessary for the proposed project	0	2	4	6

Funding Priority (Not Scored)

Select all that apply.

Will the proposed project:

- a) Serve public charter LEAs with high-need populations? All identified partner LEAs must have student populations that were, based on SY2021-22 audited enrollment:
 - a. At least 10 percent English learners, and/or
 - b. At least 16 percent students with disabilities
- b) Focus on hard-to-staff grade levels, as evidenced by at least two years of recruitment, retention, and/or vacancy data for the partner LEAs?
- c) Focus on hard-to-staff subjects, as evidenced by at least two years of recruitment, retention, and/or vacancy data for the partner LEAs?
- d) Provide pathways for paraprofessionals to become certified teachers?

Appendix C

Program Specific Assurances

As the duly authorized representative of the applicant, I certify that the applicant, if awarded the grant:

- Will comply with activities necessary to carry out a mandated evaluation of the Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) as specified in Section 3011(a)(1) of the SOAR Act;
- Will submit semi-annual narrative reports describing the implementation of the proposal as well as its impact on educational outcomes;
- Will expend all funds by the end of the grant period;
- Will submit at least one reimbursement request per quarter in which the grant recipient makes an expenditure;
- Acknowledges and agrees that the completion of this application, or the approval to fund an application, will not be deemed to be a binding obligation of OSSE until such time as the Grant Award Notification (GAN) is delivered to the recipient;
- Recognizes that OSSE approval of an application does not relieve the public charter school of its responsibility to comply with all applicable requirements;
- Will administer each program covered by the application in accordance with all applicable statutes, regulations, program plans and applications;
- Will use fiscal control and fund accounting procedures that will ensure proper disbursement of, and accounting for, federal funds paid to the grant recipient under each program;
- Will make reports to the state agency and to the Secretary as may reasonably be necessary to enable the state agency and the Secretary to perform their duties and that the grant recipient will maintain such records, including the records required under section 1232f of the General Education Provisions Act and provide access to those records, as the state agency or the Secretary deem necessary to perform their duties;
- Will provide reasonable opportunities for the participation by teachers, parents and other interested agencies, organizations and individuals in the planning for and operation of each program;
- Agrees that any application, evaluation, periodic program plan or report relating to each program will be made readily available to parents and other members of the general public;
- Agrees that none of the funds expended will be used to acquire equipment (including computer software) in any instance in which such acquisition results in a direct financial benefit to any organization representing the interests of the purchasing entity or its employees or any affiliate of such an organization; and

- Will comply with all District laws, regulations, guidance and Mayor's Orders regarding District COVID-19 vaccination requirements, as applicable.